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Statement dated 9 March 2009 by the Chair of the Central African Republic configuration

1. Over the past six months, the Peacebuilding Commission's configuration on the Central African Republic has been seized by the situation in the country, and has taken note of many recent positive developments in the country's peace process and progress towards stability, including the implementation of the recommendations of the inclusive political dialogue, the establishment of a Government open to the opposition, of a follow-up committee of the inclusive political dialogue and of a steering committee for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. These measures and the agreement on an independent electoral commission to prepare the 2010 elections are encouraging signs of the willingness of all stakeholders to work towards equitable power-sharing, an inclusive Government and the implementation of a national vision of a peaceful and prosperous Central African Republic.

2. However, the Peacebuilding Commission is seriously concerned about the resurgence of violence in the north of the country, resulting in insecurity and the additional displacement of thousands of civilians. In the light of these developments, the Peacebuilding Commission encourages all parties that participated in the inclusive political dialogue to implement the recommendations of the dialogue in a timely manner and in the spirit of national reconciliation and calls upon all politico-military groups, in particular the Front démocratique du peuple centrafricain, to sign and adhere to the Libreville Comprehensive Peace Agreement. The Peacebuilding Commission also urges restraint on all parties, stresses the need to avoid retaliatory attacks and strongly encourages a response to the needs of the thousands of civilians displaced and affected by the conflict.

3. The Peacebuilding Commission believes that the most urgent action required to maintain the momentum of the inclusive political dialogue is the finalization and successful implementation of a disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme. However, the programme document cannot be finalized without complete lists of combatants of each of the politico-military groups. The initial 25 February deadline for the completion of the lists has already been postponed to 16 March. No further delays can or should be entertained. We cannot afford to lose any more time.

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4. With regard to the funding of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, the Peacebuilding Commission stands ready to advocate for urgent contributions from international partners to the trust fund set up by United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) to ensure a transparent and accountable funding process for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the Central African Republic. The remaining amount of the already allocated envelope of the Peacebuilding Fund could be made immediately available for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration once the programme document is finalized and a project proposal is submitted for approval to the steering committee and onward to New York, in order to launch sensitization and other activities in preparation for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration.

5. The Peacebuilding Commission also calls upon the Government of the Central African Republic and UNDP to finalize arrangements for the transfer of the 8 billion CFA francs pledged by the Central African Economic and Monetary Community in Libreville on 30 January for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration activities in the Central African Republic, once available, to the trust fund.

6. The Peacebuilding Commission remains committed to assist the Central African Republic in its efforts towards national reconciliation and reconstruction. The Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in the Central African Republic, drafted in close cooperation with all national and international stakeholders, will soon be finalized and set the ground for the long-term engagement between the Central African Republic and the Peacebuilding Commission.